

# **MAINE FIRE PROTECTION SERVICES COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES January 3, 2005**

Chair Darrel Fournier called the Maine Fire Protection Services Commission to order at 1:07 p.m. at the DPS Fallen Heroes Conference Room, Central Maine Commerce Center, 45 Commerce Drive, Augusta. Members present were Michael Albert, Jack Berry, Jay Bradshaw, Senator Bruce Bryant, Chief Jeffrey Cammack, John Cannon, Chief Darrel Fournier, Robert Gardiner (for Art Cleaves), Geoffrey Maker, Senator Richard Nass, Harty Norris, Chief Jethro Pease, Charles Soltan, Joe Thomas (for John Dean), Leslie Wiles (for Bill Williams) and Steve Willis. Members absent were Representative Patricia Blanchette, Representative Robert Duplessie, and David Wacker. Edward Johnston was excused from the meeting. Alex McPhedran from the Maine State Federation of Fire Fighters, Betsy McPhedran and Steve Bunker from E-911 were guests of the Fire Commission.

***A motion by Jethro Pease, seconded by Charles Soltan, to accept the minutes of the November 8, 2004 meeting.*** The motion passed unanimously.

***A motion by Jethro Pease, seconded by Jay Bradshaw, to accept the minutes of the December 6, 2004 meeting.*** The motion passed unanimously.

## **Reports of Committees**

The Blaine House Conference on Emergency First Response will be held on Friday, March 11<sup>th</sup> at the Augusta Civic Center. A draft of the conference brochure was distributed to members and several suggestions and changes were made. The brochures will be distributed to the Fire Commission's member organizations as well as Police Chiefs, Sheriffs and E-911. Brochures will also be sent to legislators and be available on the Fire Commission's and Maine Municipal Association's websites. Fire Commission members agreed space would be allotted for displays similar to the Hall of Flags event. Vendors will also have areas to display their products and materials. Three vendors have agreed to participate and there will be space for 3 or 5 additional displays.

The Traffic Direction committee reports they have scheduled a meeting to work on drafting language and expects to submit a proposal to the Fire Commission at the February meeting.

The Best Practices committee has not received new nominations for 2004 Best Practices candidates and encouraged Fire Commission members to submit names of worthy individuals and organizations. Several suggestions were made at the meeting and the committee will review those names.

## Old Business

Fire Commission members discussed the proposed health care study legislation. L.D. 10 was printed and referenced to the Criminal Justice and Public Safety Committee. The CJ/PS committee has scheduled the bill for public hearing on Monday, January 24<sup>th</sup>. Members were also informed about a report titled *Final Report of the Task Force to Study Parity and Portability of Retirement Benefits For State Law Enforcement Officers, Municipal and County Law Enforcement Officers and Firefighters*. The task force was created by the 121<sup>st</sup> Legislature and met in the summer of 2004. Copies of the report can be found on the Maine Legislature's website under Office of Policy and Legal Analysis, Legislative Study Reports. Hard copies will be available at the February meeting.

Members were informed of additional legislation of interest to the Fire Commission including LD 385 "An Act to Limit the Liability of Ambulance Services in Maine" (Judiciary has not scheduled the bill for public hearing) and LD 104 "An Act to Require Cigarettes Sold in Maine to be Fire-safe" (CJ/PS held a public hearing on January 24<sup>th</sup>).

Fire Commission members reviewed plans for the Maine Fire Service/EMS Day at the State House scheduled for Wednesday, January 19<sup>th</sup> in the Hall of Flags from 8:00 a.m. –2:00 p.m. Twenty tables will be provided for displays and refreshments will be available. Members agreed to coordinate efforts to start a Legislative Fire Caucus with Maine Fire Service/EMS Day. A letter will be drafted and distributed to legislators urging their participation. A sign-up sheet and fire caucus buttons will be available in the Hall of Flags. The first meeting of the Fire Caucus is also planned for January 19<sup>th</sup>.

Members were updated on the status of statewide mutual aide and told the Maine Attorney General's Office was reviewing the plan.

The Fire Commission has three vacancies- the Governor's representative, a member of the House of Representatives (term limits) and a representative of the Maine State Federation of Fire Fighters (member retired in November 2004). The Fire Commission will urge the Governor's Office to fill two positions as soon as possible. The Speaker of the House of Representatives has indicated his willingness to appoint a House member by February 2005.

Members received a draft outline of the annual report and agreed to continue the same format used in the 2003 report.

## New Business

Fire Commission received the roster of the 122<sup>nd</sup> Legislature's Criminal Justice and Public Safety Committee. Representative Patricia Blanchette, a member of the Fire Commission, is the CJ/PS committee's House Chair.

Chief Fournier noted he would be speaking this month to various groups on fire service issues. Members were encouraged to attend meetings in their areas.

Executive summaries of the *Final Report of the Task Force to Study Parity and Portability of Retirement Benefits For State Law Enforcement Officers, Municipal and County Law Enforcement Officers and Firefighters* were

distributed. (see Old Business) Fire Commission members agreed to review the final report and discuss its findings and recommendations at the February meeting. Members discussed collecting data on the numbers of firefighters who retired in 2004 and determining how many may not have insurance. Eligibility of firefighters to meet 24/24 requirements and the ability to get accurate numbers were also discussed. Members agreed an accurate database was needed. Jack Berry, Chief Fournier, Steve Willis and Harty Norris agreed to serve on the committee.

With no further business to come before the Maine Fire Protection Services Commission, Chief Darrel Fournier adjourned the meeting at 2:42 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan M. Pinette

Please mark your calendars:

Monday, March 7 <sup>th</sup>	Regular Meeting	State House	1:00pm
Thursday, March 10 <sup>th</sup>	Legislative Night	Ground Round	4pm-7:00pm
Friday, March 11 <sup>th</sup>	Spring Conference	ACC	8am-4:00pm
Monday, April 4 <sup>th</sup>	Regular Meeting	State House	1:00pm
Monday, May 2 <sup>nd</sup>	Regular Meeting	State House	1:00pm